



Simon Hullihen

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Simon Hullihen ([/hʌlɪzən/](#) *HULL-i-hen*) MD, [DDS](#) (December 10, 1810 – March 27, 1857) was a dental surgeon born in [Point Township, Northumberland County, Pennsylvania](#).^[2] He completed his medical degree and then was inspired to seek a career in oral and maxillofacial surgery. Regarded as the first oral surgeon in the United States, he helped to develop many modern techniques of [maxillofacial surgery](#) and contributed to the establishment of oral and maxillofacial surgery as a surgical specialty.^[3]

Life [[edit source](#)]

Simon was born into an Irish-American family of farmers in [Northumberland County, Pennsylvania](#) in about 1810. At about the age of nine, he fell into a [lime kiln](#) and hurt both of his feet so badly that he was left bedridden for two years. It was during this experience, frequently treated by local physicians, that he decided to pursue medicine as his career. He obtained his MD from [Washington Medical College](#), in Baltimore in 1832. He also started his career as an instructor there but eventually moved to [Canton, Ohio](#) to practice medicine. He then moved to [Pittsburgh](#) where he met his future wife Elizabeth, whom he married in 1835. He and wife Elizabeth planned to relocate to Kentucky but Simon became too ill to complete the journey. So instead, they settled along the way in [Wheeling, West Virginia](#). There he opened a practice devoted to surgery of the mouth, head and neck.^[4] In 1857 at about the age of 47, Hullin














Career [\[edit source \]](#)

Hullihen's practice in Wheeling gained him accord with other local physicians and he became well known for his pioneering work on the treatment of [cleft lip and palate](#). Hullihen advocated that a cleft lip can be repaired on an infant but a cleft palate cannot be repaired until later ages due to its need for a cooperative patient. In 1842, [University of Maryland School of Dentistry](#), formerly known as Baltimore College of Dentistry, awarded an honorary Doctorate of Dental Surgery to Hullihen. In 1849, he published a paper in *American Journal of Dental Science* entitled "Case of Elongation of the Underjaw and Distortion of the Face and Neck, Caused by a Burn, Successfully Treated," which is the world's first scientific paper published on an orthognathic surgery.^{[5][6]}

Hullihen also founded the Wheeling Hospital which established the first hospital-based dental clinic in United States.^[7] During his career he performed around 1,100 orthognathic surgeries including the first mandibular osteotomy surgery to correct a protrusive malposed alveolar segment of the mandible. Due to his achievements, [American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons](#) dedicated its 55th annual meeting to Hullihen's memory.^[8]

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